

repairing wiring for the existing base of BSP payphones. Even though no interface may have been installed yet, a demarcation point can and should be identified to determine at what point wire maintenance should be charged separately to BSP as "inside wire" maintenance and at what point wire maintenance may be included as part of the tariffed access service.

### **C. Service Order Processing**

With respect to service order processing, independent payphone providers ("IPPs") have experienced difficulties in the past because BellSouth has followed burdensome and discriminatory procedures that are not equally applicable to BellSouth's own payphone operation. For example, when an IPP provider orders service to a location to install a payphone to replace an existing BellSouth payphone, BellSouth personnel would not connect the new payphone without first checking to see if the BellSouth payphone was under a contract. While there might be disputes between BellSouth's payphone division and the location provider over whether an existing contract remained in force, such disputes should not prevent the connection of a new payphone.

Currently, BellSouth's Handbook states that, when locations are under contract to BellSouth, service orders for a different PSP will be processed in the usual manner as long as disconnection of the existing BellSouth payphone is not requested. However, it is typically more convenient and economical to install a new payphone in the same place, and using the same network connection, as the payphone that is being replaced. If

disconnection of the existing BellSouth payphone is requested, the Handbook provides that authorization for disconnection must be obtained from the "customer of record." In addition:

No disconnection orders regarding contracted (BST) pay telephone accounts will be processed. BST disconnects contracted accounts only in strict accordance with the terms of the contract.

As a result, an IPP provider frequently is subjected to ambiguous and conflicting directives and determinations as to who is the "customer of record," whether a valid authorization has been obtained, and, once obtained, whether it has any effect in permitting disconnection of BellSouth's payphone to allow the new payphone to use at the same facilities. BSPC should be required to refile its plan specifying in detail a single, nondiscriminatory procedure that will be followed regardless of the identity of the existing PSP.

#### **IV. NUMBERS, DIGITS, CALL TRACKING**

##### **A. Number Assignments**

Assignment to payphones of line numbers in the 8000 to 9000 range provides a distinct advantage in the prevention of fraud because they alert overseas operators to refrain from completing collect calls to such numbers.<sup>10</sup> As indicated by the attached letter from AT&T, IXC's frequently attempt to collect charges for incoming collect calls placed to

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<sup>10</sup> On domestic calls, IXC's usually determine whether to complete collect calls by accessing LIDB and checking for the presence of billed number screening on the line. According to AT&T, it is not practical for overseas operators to access LIDB to determine the presence of billed number screening on a line to which a collect call is being placed.

payphones from overseas, even though the payphone is subscribed to billed number screening.

BellSouth's Handbook states that "[w]henever possible, telephone numbers with a line number range of 8000 or 9000 will be assigned on new service requests." Handbook at 13-2 (emphasis added). However, the Handbook does not address the reallocation of numbers to existing payphones. Numbers in the 8000 to 9000 range were made available only relatively recently to IPP providers.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, these numbers have been available to LEC payphones for many years. Consequently, APCC believes that 8000 and 9000 series numbers are assigned to a much higher percentage of the installed base of LEC payphones than the percentage they represent of the installed base of IPPs. BellSouth should be required to allocate the numbers assigned to the existing base of payphones, without charge, so that an equal percentage of LEC payphones and IPPs are assigned 8000 and 9000 series numbers. See Payphone Order, ¶ 149.

## **B. ANI II Digits**

BellSouth's CEI Plan fails to provide detail on the types of screening service BellSouth will offer to independent and BellSouth payphones. However, BellSouth filings in another docket indicate that BellSouth will continue discriminating in favor of its own

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<sup>11</sup> While the Handbook indicates that 8000-9000 services were assigned to IPP providers "[w]henever possible" as of 1992, it does not indicate how BellSouth determined when such assignment was "possible." For example, did IPP providers have the same priority as BellSouth's own payphones, or was there a pool of numbers reserved for BellSouth's own use?

payphones in the provision of screening service. BellSouth must be ordered to discontinue such discriminatory treatment.

Specifically, prior to the Payphone Order, the Commission ordered LECs to provide an improved version of originating line screening ("OLS") that would enable IXCs to uniquely identify calls originating from IPPs using "COCOT" lines. Policies and Rules Concerning Operator Service Access and Pay Telephone Compensation, Third Report and Order, FCC 96-131, released April 5, 1996. Traditionally, IPPs using COCOT lines have been assigned the "07" code, which merely indicates the presents of calling restrictions and can be assigned to a variety of non-payphone lines. LEC payphones, by contrast, benefit from a unique "27" code associated with coin lines.

BellSouth initially indicated that it would implement the Commission's requirement by offering "Flex ANI," a service that permits the assignment of a "70" code that uniquely identifies COCOT lines. Recently, however, BellSouth stated that it has changed its mind and decided to provide LIDB-based OLS rather than Flex ANI. See BellSouth's Petition for Waiver, filed December 5, 1996. With LIDB-based OLS, LECs continue to provide independent payphone service providers ("PSPs") using COCOT lines with the "07" code, which does not uniquely identify calls as payphone calls. To obtain such a unique identification, IXCs must arrange for access to LIDB information, which involves significant expense and/or delay. By contrast, LECs deploying LIDB-based OLS will continue to provide their own payphones, which use primarily "coin lines" with a "27"

code that does uniquely identify calls to IXC's as payphone calls without any necessity to obtain additional information from LIDB.

While LIDB-based OLS may satisfy a LEC's pre-Telecommunications Act obligations, it is clearly inferior to the unique code provided to LEC payphones using coin lines, and such inferior treatment is inconsistent with the nondiscrimination requirement of Section 276(a). Moreover, the importance of unique screening codes for payphones has been heightened as a result of the Commission's orders in Docket No. 96-128. The Commission's Order on Reconsideration in the payphone docket confirms that PSPs must ensure transmission of codes that enable IXC's to track calls. Accordingly, LECs are required to provide services "that provide a discrete code to identify payphones that are maintained by non-LEC providers." Implementation of the Pay Telephone Reclassification and Compensation Provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Order on Reconsideration, CC Docket No. 96-128, FCC 96-439, released November 8, 1996, ¶94 ("Payphone Reconsideration").

It is unclear whether IXC's will consider LIDB-based OLS to be a satisfactory mechanism for tracking payphone calls. As mentioned above, with LIDB-based OLS, an IXC does not immediately know whether a call has originated from a COCOT line. The IXC must either query LIDB or check some other reliable data base in order to confirm whether the call is from a payphone and therefore, compensable under the Payphone Order. APCC's experience with the data base currently used to administer flat-rate compensation is that the data base information is frequently unreliable and imposes

substantial delays and costs in collecting compensation. Frequently, compensation for a given period is never collected on certain payphones because of the difficulties of securing LEC verification.

Therefore, it is clear that the ability to transmit a unique code for its coin lines will give BSPC a great advantage in the collection of per-call compensation from IXCs, compared with PSPs using COCOT lines, which can only transmit a "07" code which requires further IXC steps to identify the call as originating from a payphone.

Accordingly, the Commission should order BellSouth to provide PSPs using COCOT lines with a screening code that uniquely identifies their lines as payphone lines. There appear to be at least two ways to provide such unique codes. First, BellSouth could reconfigure the existing codes that are universally available, so that a unique code is available for COCOT lines as well as coin lines. Second, BellSouth could reconsider its decision not to deploy and use the Flex ANI code. The Commission should require BellSouth to refile its CEI plan specifying one of these two procedures.

### **C. Other Call Tracking Services**

BellSouth's CEI Plan does not indicate whether any call tracking services, other than the screening codes discussed above, will be provided to enable BSPC or other PSPs to track compensable calls for purposes of ensuring collection of per-call compensation. Such tracking services will be very important when per-call compensation takes effect in November 1997, because without LEC tracking, PSPs currently have no means to

determine, for example, which of their subscriber 800 calls have been routed to which carriers. In the absence of such information, PSPs must rely totally on each IXC's ability and willingness to accurately track calls received from the PSP's payphones. Given the IXC's inherent incentive to pay as little compensation as possible, it is very important for PSPs to have an independent means of tracking the compensable calls routed to each IXC.

BellSouth should be required to state whether it currently provides any call tracking to BSPC, and if so, to describe such call tracking and to cease offering it to BSPC until the same call tracking service is available on a nondiscriminatory basis to other PSPs.<sup>12</sup> If BellSouth does not currently provide call tracking to BSPC, it should be required to file an amendment to its CEI plan at least six months in advance of providing such call tracking, to that the Commission has an opportunity to evaluate CEI compliance and so that other PSPs have an opportunity to test the service.

## **V. OPERATOR SERVICES**

BellSouth's CEI plan does not address the intraLATA operator services offered with its public payphones. BellSouth should be required to specify whether it considers operator services to be part of BSPC's deregulated payphone service or whether it considers operator services to be a separable service that is not "ancillary" to its payphone service.

If operator services are part of BSPC's deregulated payphone service, BellSouth should explain whether BSPC is providing such services (1) in the payphone, (2) by

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<sup>12</sup> Ameritech's CEI plan indicates that it currently provides such a service, although the service is tarified at exorbitant rates.

reselling network-based operator functions. Further, BellSouth should be required to identify the network functions supporting such services and to indicate how those same functions will be offered to PSPs on a nondiscriminatory basis.

If operator services are a separable regulated service that is not "ancillary" to BSPC's deregulated payphone service, BellSouth still must ensure that it is not discriminating between BSPC and other PSPs in the provision of such services. For example, if BellSouth is offering a commission to BSPC for presubscribing its payphones to BellSouth's operator service, such commissions must also be available to independent PSPs on the same terms and conditions. BellSouth should be required to submit a copy of its presubscription contract with BSPC and to state that it will offer the same terms and conditions to other IPPs.

## CONCLUSION

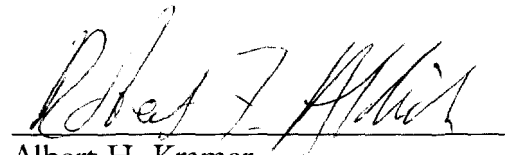
BellSouth's CEI plan fails to provide sufficient specificity and contains outright violations of CEI requirements and the Payphone Order as detailed above. Therefore, BellSouth's CEI plan must be rejected. BellSouth must be required to refile its plan in accordance with the foregoing comments. Since a great deal of relevant material was omitted and must be supplied, the Commission should require the refiled plan to be served



on commenting parties and to be subject to the same comment period, so that parties have an adequate opportunity to review and comment on the new material submitted.

Dated: December 30, 1997

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert F. Aldrich", is written over a horizontal line.

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December 13, 1996

North Carolina Payphone Association  
PO Box 8179  
Greensboro NC 27419  
Attn: Vince Townsend

Dear Vince:

Recently PhoneTel ordered extra payphone lines at a location in South Carolina called South Of The Border. We presently have 26 existing payphones at this location. One of the lines we were ordering was an extra line next to our existing payphone.

When we placed the order we requested the interface be located at the same location as our existing payphone interface. After the Bell South technician came out he informed my technician that they no longer ran interfaces past the point of entry at the property. However, I was contacted by the supervisor in this area early this morning and told that they would be glad to run past the point of entry for a fee. The phone room at this location is 1/2 mile from my payphone.

Bell South has pedestals through out this property and until recently we have never had a problem having the interface at or near our payphones. My technician was also told by the Bell South technician that Bell South was going to quit doing all our work for us. I'm not looking for anyone to do our work for us all I want is to be treated like a customer. I'm sure if the people at South Of The Border requested an additional phone line at the same place, Bell South would have no problem in accommodating their request.

The problem that I have with this new policy is that PhoneTel Technologies is the customer not South Of The Border. My point of entry is my payphone not South Of The Borders phone room.

Any help you can give on the above situation would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

  
Jeff Huffman

PhoneTel Technologies Inc.

Lincolnton, North Carolina 28092

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Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that on December 30, 1996, a copy of the foregoing Comments of the American Public Communications Council was hand-delivered or sent by first class United States mail to:

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